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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Railroad Administration. By RAY MORRIS, M.A. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1910. 8vo, pp. x+309. \$2.00 net.

This new book on railroad administration deals principally with the problems of organization. According to the foreword of the publishers it is intended to help broaden the young specialist by giving him an idea of the relation of his specialty to the entire program and, as well, to give the non-technical man a general notion of how the various problems of administration are handled.

The first chapter discusses the beginnings of a railroad and clearly describes the legal and financial preliminaries of its organization and construction. Then comes a well-rounded treatment of operating organization. The very small road is first described; then the middle group; and finally the larger systems, such as the Harriman Lines, Pennsylvania, and New York Central. Succeeding the detailed description of applied organization comes a theoretical discussion of the various types of organization and a general statement of the duties of each officer. Next is an able chapter on British railways, illustrated by charts of the representative companies. This is followed by an examination of the types of governmental railway organization—voluntary control in Germany, involuntary control in India, and the experiments of Italy. The last section of the book deals with the financial side of organization and the part played by the banker; the railroads' relation to the public; the control of operation through statistics; and, finally, a summary of the tendencies of railroad development.

In his treatment of the moot question of departmental v. divisional organization, the author shows a marked sympathy for the divisional type; in fact, the book is a strong brief for that form of organization. He alludes rather pointedly to the Pennsylvania and New York Central as distinct types of the two schools—the Pennsylvania an exponent of the divisional plan, with its superintendents in control of maintenance as well as transportation—the New York Central a notable example of the departmental type, its superintendents being confined in jurisdiction to transportation. Incidentally, Mr. Morris makes a clear distinction between line and staff officers. On the Pennsylvania each general superintendent has his staff and line subordinates, the principal assistant engineer and the superintendent of motive power being staff officers in charge of *things*; the division superintendent a line officer in charge of *men*. Staff officers issue instructions governing *how* the work is to be done; line officers say *when* to do it, so far as it relates to current operation. The Pennsylvania divisional plan is compared to the organization of an army; its board of directors being the war council or general staff; the president, its field marshal or general; the vice-president, a major general; the general manager, the brigadier general. Each general superintendent compares with a colonel and each superintendent with a captain. It is not necessary that a superintendent shall know how to use a transit, calculate bridge stresses, or set a valve gear, but he

must accept all current responsibility for his position and utilize staff assistants on technical matters. This is about what the Pennsylvania Railroad does, but on the New York Central the departmental organization circumscribes the authority of the superintendent in that he has no direct control over the division officials of the motive power or maintenance of way departments. While the New York Central manual authorizes the superintendent to assume such authority in an emergency, Mr. Morris believes that the rule is faulty since it gives a superintendent unaccustomed work to do and to think about at the precise time when he needs to be able to work automatically with forces accustomed to obey his orders. Further, he criticizes the New York Central plan for overburdening the general manager with more detail than he can properly handle, thus contributing to the evil of "rule by chief clerk." He hints also at the pernicious effect of departmental rivalries and jealousies. He might have illustrated this feature by citing the occasional difficulty under the departmental organization of definitely locating the cause of accidents when two or more departments are implicated. Obviously, this difficulty is less under the divisional plan where the superintendent is in charge of all operating departments and responsible for maintenance as well as transportation.

Mr. Morris' criticism of the New York Central has some foundation, but it will be found that the organization charts do not tell the whole story. In the case of the Pennsylvania, there has been a tendency lately for the superintendent to give more personal attention to the transportation department and exercise less authority in the technical departments. This course has become necessary in late years because of the increasing difficulty in dealing with organized labor. The labor problem, with other large problems of operation, now takes precedence, and the superintendent cannot give the same measure of consideration to maintenance, where there has not been a corresponding increase in the difficulties of administration. On the other hand, the superintendent on the New York Central, without definite authority over maintenance, is becoming more of a power in division management through closer local co-operation.

In discussing the reasons for the antagonism toward railroads, Mr. Morris is quite severe in his criticism of the American Railway Association for its indecision and inaction at times when its influence should have been active and constructive. He charges the association with busying itself with formalities and trivialities; resisting public opinion when it should have led it; ignoring complaints of discrimination and rebating when it should have worked harmoniously to eliminate them; and all the time leaving the remedy to the clumsy hands of the lawmaker. In a footnote, he gives as his belief that if the association had broken away squarely from its tradition of non-interference in 1905, and by a majority vote had used its potential strength in the interest of the common good, the political history of the last five years would have been very different.

Perhaps he is right. It is not unreasonable to suppose that if the railroads had adopted a policy of concerted remedial action they might have avoided much burdensome and trammeling legislation. Instead, the recalcitrant roads were permitted to continue practices which brought punishment on both the guilty and the guiltless. For example, it was quite plain to the railroads long before the enactment of the sixteen-hour law that regulation of the kind was

inevitable while some roads were permitting or requiring such long hours on duty in train service. Vigorous and united action in eliminating the abuses might have made legislation unnecessary, but no general plan of the kind was tried. The American Railway Association remained inactive.

In fairness to the association, however, it should be said that Mr. Morris' criticism is not as applicable today as it was five years ago. During the past two or three years there has been an awakening to a sense of the responsibilities of the association and the possibilities of widening and quickening its influence. The admirable work of the new committee on "Relations between Railroads" under the able direction of Mr. Arthur Hale, bears witness to the fact that a change has taken place. A more recent committee, on "Relation of Railway Operation to Legislation," is also doing commendable work directly along the lines advocated by Mr. Morris.

The book is not only clearly written but is also comprehensive in its treatment and unusually interesting. It admirably answers its avowed purpose of affording to the non-technical reader the managers' viewpoint toward the problems of actual railroad administration in this country, with a glance at comparative conditions in other countries. Its value, however, is not confined to the non-technical reader. Railroad officers of all departments will find it both entertaining and profitable to look at their familiar problems through Mr. Morris' spectacles.

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Histoire du commerce de la France. Par E. LEVASSEUR. Première partie: Avant 1789. Paris: Arthur Rousseau, éditeur, 1911. 8vo, pp. xxxiii+611.

It is little to the credit of the French Republic that there is but one chair of economic history in its whole educational system, and that in the Collège de France. Not a single French university possesses such a chair. But it is much to the honor of French scholarship that the incumbent of that position is so distinguished a scholar as the venerable *doyen* of the ancient institution founded by Francis I. Eight years ago when the writer listened to his lectures M. Levasseur was a thin, frail, elderly gentleman in whom the light of learning still burned bright and whose deep scholarship yet seemed unimpaired by physical decline. Today he is 83 years of age and yet has been able to put forth another monumental tome. Such a combination of scholarship, industry, and physical vigor is rare since those great days of erudition in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

There is a certain melancholy grandeur attached to this stately volume. M. Levasseur believes that it is his valedictory: "Je croyais que ce volume serait mon dernier ouvrage," he writes. Looking along the shelves of other men's books he says he found that there was no *complete* history of French commerce, both internal and external, from earliest times to the present. Pigeonneau's death interrupted his work on the threshold of Colbert's policy.

The present volume is but half of the subject. A subsequent one will cover the commercial history of France since the Revolution. In manner and method of exposition the work is similar to the *Histoire des classes ouvrières et de*